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Spring

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JOURNAL

SPRING 1978

Volume 6 Number 1

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The NCNA JOURNAL is the official publication of the North Carolina Numismatic Association, Inc., an educational, non-profit organization. It is published Quarterly at Greensboro, N.C..

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President's Message

Dear Fellow Officers and Members:

Over six months have passed since our last convention. Spring is busting out all over. This is the time of year that most people stop talking about the weather and start planning to go places and to consider other things. So, why not give some thought toward building our membership in N.C.N.A.? There are a lot of local clubs that would probably join if you would encourage them to do so, and lots of good friends of yours who would make fine members if you would ask them. So, give us a helping hand.

Now, let me say something concerning our JOURNAL. First, we need more advertising. Secondly, we need more news items and pictures. Perhaps our Clubs could appoint a newsman for this purpose. Advertising is very essential to our cause, and I request that our dealer members consider advertising in the JOURNAL. With their help, and the help of all our members in contributing articles, we will succeed in our objectives.

I had a recent conversation with our "Director of Convention", Ted Hendrick. He states everything is looking good at present and sees no problems in the future. His opinion is that all bourse tables will be sold within the next six or eight weeks.

Again, I mention our Convention dates are October 13, 14, and 15, at the Holiday Inn North, Charlotte, N.C. Please keep this in mind and remind others. There was much socializing at our last Convention, eating, going places, and talking. If you have never attended, why not come this year? We are sure you'll have a great time!

Your President,

James W. Little

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

I am not going to drop any pearls of wisdom on you this month. Instead, I am putting in this space a letter I received from Russell E. Southworth--a response to my editorial in our December Issue. So here goes:

"Dear John:

In the last issue of the JOURNAL your editorial addressed the question facing many coin organizations across the nation, "SOULD THERE BE AN ADMISSION CHARGE FOR COIN SHOWS?

If anyone had approached me on the subject five or so years ago I would have responded without hesitation--a firm NO!

But alas, today I would change my opinion and be receptive to a modest charge as you suggested. In your comments you touched on various aspects of the problems encountered, and in particular the ever increasing expenses involved in putting on a first class coin show.

Anyone who attended the gun and coin show in City of Charlotte this past February will recall the long lines of people waiting to pay the admission charge to the show. (Coin Club members with current membership cards were exempt from the admission charge). The average person possibly does not really know the expenses incurred both by the sponsoring club as well as the coin dealers who pay the bourse fee for space at the show. The sponsors have to rent the space to hold the show and also pay for police or private protection around the clock during the entire period of the show. These are major items of expense, but many other costs occur in connection with the show. If no admission charge is made to the general public, the only resource for covering these expenses will be the solely from the fee charged to participating dealers for the bourse tables. Looking at the other side of the coin however, the dealer has many other expenses in addition to the bourse fee. He has the cost of travel, lodging and meals, and other miscellaneous expenses. If the dealer brings an associate, or his

(Continued on Page 14)

CALENDAR OF CAROLINA COIN SHOWS

April 7,8,9, 1978
Lower Cape Fear River Coin Club Show, Elks Club, 5102 Oleander Drive, Wilmington, N.C. Exhibits

April 22, 23, 1978
Craven County Coin Club Show (8th Annual), Ramada Inn New Bern, N.C.. Bourse Chairman: M.D. Stamps, P.O. Box 325, Havelock, N.C. 28532 Exhibits

April 29,30 1978
Greensboro Coin Club Show, Friendly Shopping Center Auditorium, West Friendly Avenue, Greensboro, N.C. Bourse Chairman: Bobby Daves, P.O. Box 20623, Greensboro, N.C. 27420 No Exhibits

May 6,7 1978
Winston-Salem Coin Club Show, Sprague Street Recreation Center, Winston-Salem, N.C.. Bourse Chairman: Curtis McHargue, P.O. Box 10138, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27108 Exhibits

June 10,11 1978
Raleigh Coin Club 5th Annual Coin and Stamp Show, Kerr Scott Building, State Fairgrounds, Raleigh, N.C.. Bourse Chairman: Halbert Carmichael, P.O. Box 18801, Raleigh, N.C. 27609. Exhibit Chairman: Gary Werner, 7700 Fiesta Way, Raleigh, N.C. 27609

July 21, 23, 1978
Land of Sky Coin Show, Inn On The Plaza (Downtown Asheville), Asheville, N.C.. Bourse Chairman: William J. Wright, Box 8464, Asheville, N.C. 28804 Exhibits

October 13, 14, 15, 1978
N.C.N.A. Annual Convention & Coin Show, Holiday Inn North, Charlotte, N.C.. Bourse Chairman: Ted H. Hendrick, Box 12052, Raleigh, N.C. 27605

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
The Editor acknowledges that he received some good pictures from the Raleigh Coin Club, and Directory information from Clubs who had not sent in by last issue. Some of these will appear in our next issue of the JOURNAL. Economic and time constraints prevent publication in this issue! Sorry, Folks!

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE ICHI-BU-GIN

BY

HOWARD JOHNSON SR.

Although many books have been written on the odd shaped coins of the Orient, the indepth study of a particular coin has been left up to the individual collector. This leaves wide gaps in the amount of material and specific information available to the average collector.

Where the Ichi-Bu- Gin is concerned, there is little documented fact on which to rely. I mention this to make you aware that everything we presently know about the coin is not necessarily true nor a substantiated fact. With the passing of time many records, numismatic items, and memories, have been lost. Perhaps forever. The bits and scraps of information remaining are insufficient to collect and correlate the solid data on many coins. In the process of tracing these coins to their source, we come across many culture and language barriers. It must be considered that even the average Japanese reader has difficulty deciphering the Kanji characters of a hundred years ago.

The Ichi-Bu-Gin was thought for many years to be a Temple Token and therefore was not collected as a coin.

The following is a brief summary of my findings, and an illustrated method of identifying the different types and varieties.

For hundreds of years the Japanese Government left the issuing of the smaller coins up to the Provinces. As a result, there was a wide variety in the amount of silver, weight, and size of coinage. It was difficult to weigh and thus unfavorable for use as bullion when Japan was introduced to the world trade market. The gold and silver supplies were thinning out rapidly in the Trade Centers, and by the early 1760's the need for a standardized coinage was desperate. The Japanese Government, at about this time, began planning the new coinage.

(Continued on Page 5)

(Continued from Page 4)

The forerunner of the Ichi-Bu-Gin was first issued in 1765. This was in a determined effort to gain control of the silver through minting a coin of standard weight and silver content. This coin, however, proved to be unfavorable to the people and was rejected. Several more attempts to get a new coin into the system, including some drastic changes, failed, and the Japanese Government began to worry. Several years passed while the research into the problem continued.

In 1837 the Government issued the Tempo, Ichi-Bu-Gin. The researchers had appparently done their homework as the coin was accepted with no concern.

Until recently there has been little research on the Ichi-Bu-Gin. Probably, for this reason, collectors seldom specialized in this area of coinage.

Three types of Ichi-Bu-Gin are covered in this study. These are the Tempo, Ansei and Meiji types. The names used for these types are those which the Emperors of that time wished to be called during their reign. Most artifacts made during the reign of a Japanese Emperor are called first by the reign name, and then by the proper. This allows the listener to place an approximate date on the conversation. Thus, the coins covered are called Tempo, Ansei, of Meiji-Ichi-Bu-Gin (Etchy-Boo-Gin, little g as in go).

Since the topic is concerned with these coins only, I will refer to each by reign names only. The respective dates of issue and other pertinent information are as follows.

Tempo Coins: 1837-1854 (Temp 8-Ansei 1)
Mintage: 78,916,556
Weight: 8.66 Grams
Silver: 991.4/1000

Ansei Coins: 1859-1868 (Ansei 6-Meiji 1)

Mintage: 11,398,600
Weight: 8.63 Grams
Silver: 989.3/1000

(Continued on Page 6)

(Continued from Page 5)

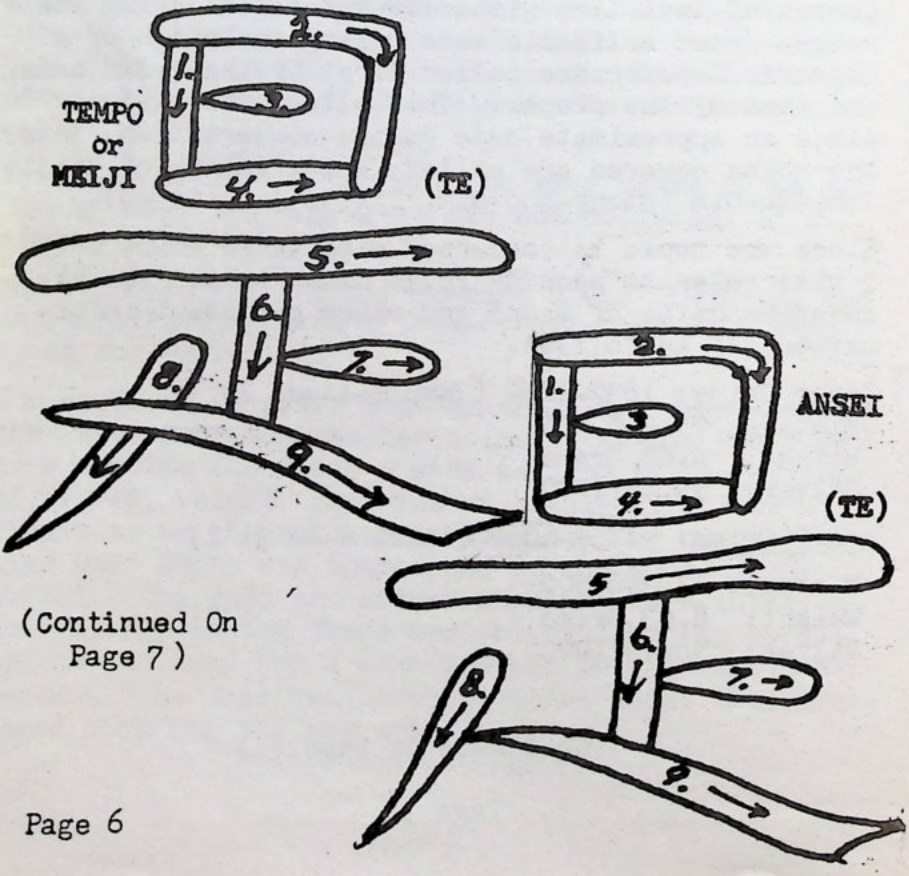
Meiji Coins: 1868-1869 (Meiji 1-Meiji 2)

Mintage: 4,267,332
Weight: 8.66 Grams
Silver: 806.6/1000

WARNING: Many counterfeits of Meiji coins exist!

Until only a few years ago, the method of identifying the three different reigns was to use the characters JO-TE (pronounced JOE-TAY). In the illustrations that follow, notice that the sequence strokes 8 and 9 cross on the Tempo and Meiji types, but do not on the Ansei. Use only the TE (lower character) for this method. To identify the difference between the Tempo and Meiji coins, use the JO (top) character.

The small strokes 1 and 3 on the Meiji coins will usually be almost vertical, while those on the Tempo and Ansei are curled and lie at an angle.



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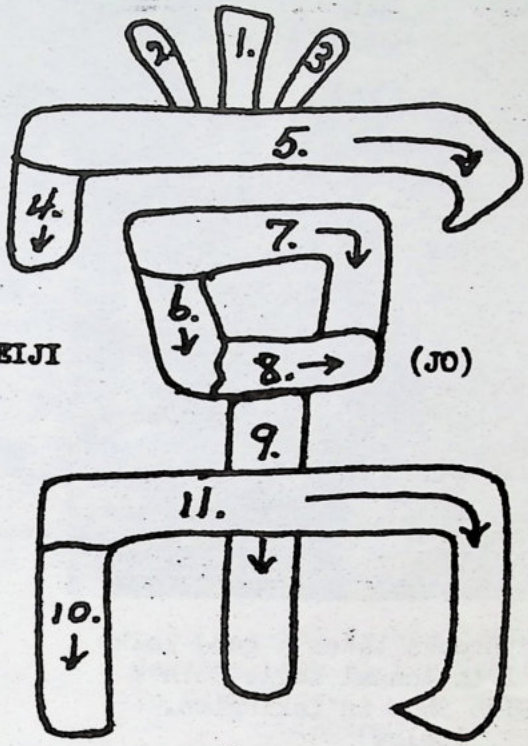
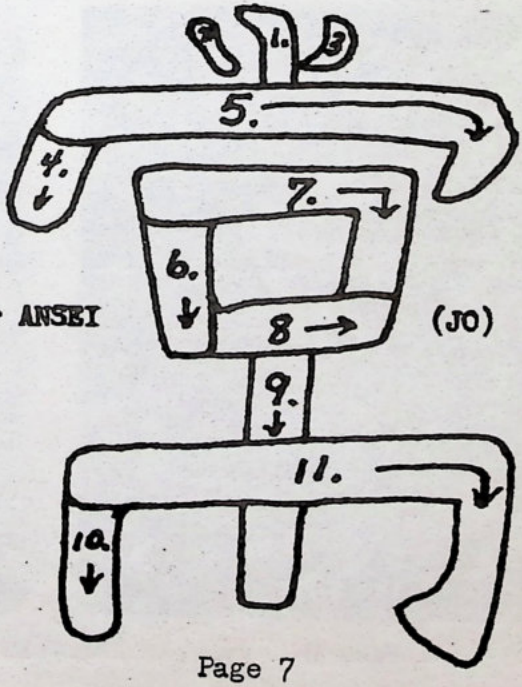


MEIJI (JO)



TEMPO or ANSEI (JO)

Mark Gazaway and Mr. C.
Thompson at Carolina Wo
Coin Show. (Editor's No
Mr. Thompson looks an a
ful like Howard Johnson
me!)

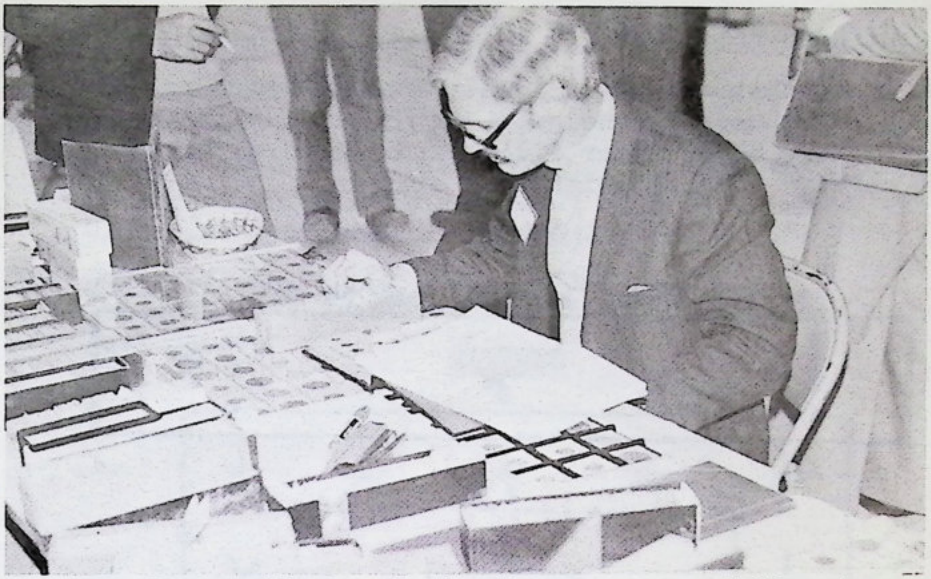
(Left)

Leonard Brooks takes a good look at his 17th Annual Eagle Coin & Stamp Club Show in Lexington.

(Below)

Kathy Smith is pu
together at her f
Club Show in Lexi

(Below



Unidentified Collector looks them over carefully at the Carolina World Coin Show! (Above)

tting something
r:st Eagle Coin
gton.

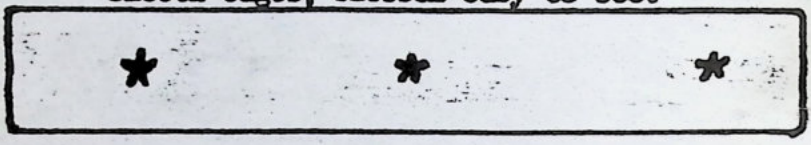
Robert Clayton is handcrafting a jewelry item at the Eagle Coin Club Show.
(Below)

(Continued from Page 7)

Still another method of identification which can be used is illustrated below. The Cherry Blosson Punch-Marks were added after filing and weighing, probably to certify correct weight and size

TEMPO

Smooth edges, blossom easy to see.



ANSEI or MEIJI

Rough edges, blossom difficult to see.

Not too long agao two leading Japanense Numismatists, Mr. Hideo Kobashigawa and Mr. Tetsuo Yonehars, discovered that the most obvious way of indentification had been overlooked. This was by using the twenty Cherry Blossoms which are evenly spaced on each side of the coin. One of the blossoms is usually inverted. This is said to have been a secret code of the minter, but this is not substantiated.

On following pages I have illustrated the Obverse and Reverse of the coin, and given each blossom a letter of the alphabet. Capital letters will be for

(Continued on Page 10)

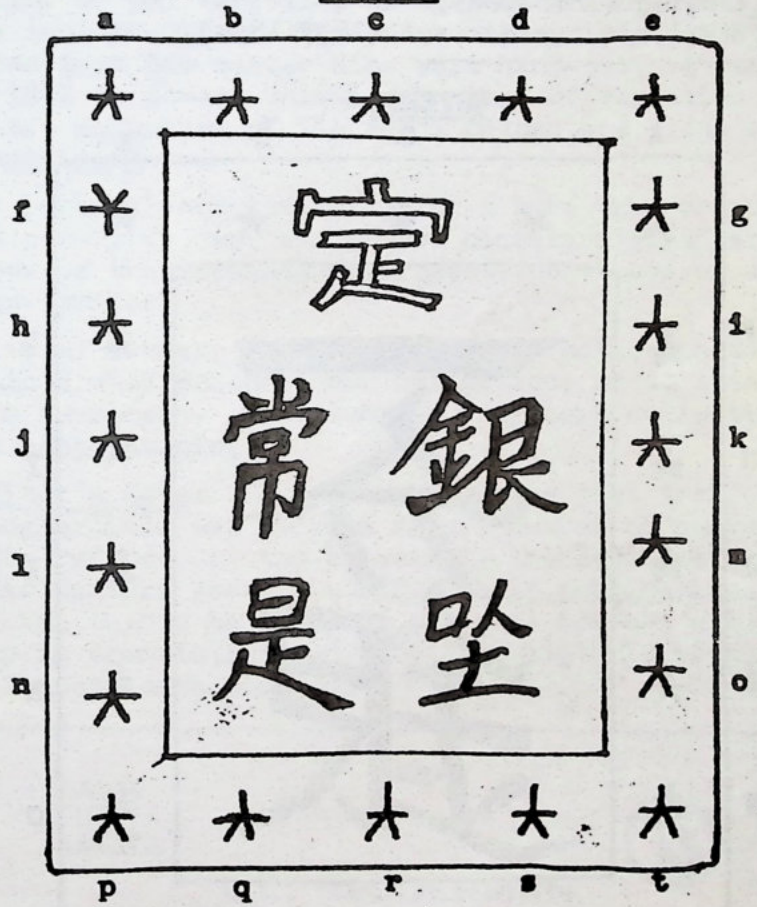
(Continued from Page 10)

The Kanji characters on these coins has always read, tob to bottom, right to left. They read:

Reverse: Gen-Za Jo-Te(Ginza Usual Standard). Also, "Standard Issue of the Ginza." (In those days the Ginza was compared to "Wall Street").

Obverse: Ichi-Bu-Gin (One-Unit-Silver).
The punched character at the top is "Sadameru", also, "standard".

REVERSE



VARIETIES

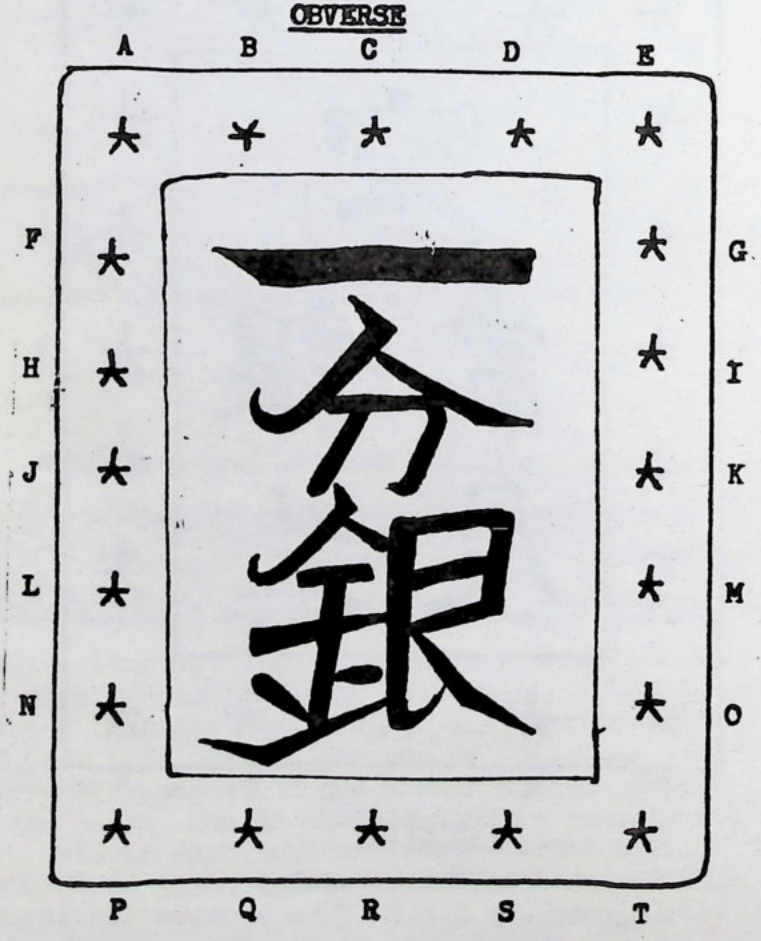
The coin depicted on the foregoing pages is an Ansei-Ichi-Bu-Gin, variety B.f.. This because the inverted blossom on the Obverse has no bearing as to the reign. At present it is unknown exactly why they appear in

(Continued on Page 12)

(Continued from Page 11)

the Obverse, and small letters for the Reverse. The area in which the inverted blossom falls, depicts the reign to which the coin belongs. The letter next to the inverted blossom will give you the variety as mentioned on Page . There are exceptions to all rules as you will see in the coming pages.

For quick reference, I have listed the letters with their corresponding reign and date.
Ansei: a,b,c,d,e,f,g (1859-1868
Meiji: h,i,j (1868-1869)
Tempo: k,l,m,n,o,p,q,r,s,t (1837-1854)



(Continued on Page 13)

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positions other than that of the reverse.

When there is no inverted blossom, the coin may be classified as a Z or z type. This depends, of course, on which side is void of the identifier. If the identifying blossom is missing on both Obverse and Reverse it is classified as Z.z. type. There are Z.z. types in all three reigns.

Because of many irregularities, there exist a possibility of 461 varieties of blossom arrangements on the Ichi-Bu-Gin. Also, if one takes into consideration that the master dies were hand-cut, it could be that an almost unlimited number of varieties within the structure of the Kanji characters alone are a possibility.

Any personal conclusions which I have used or implied are purely my own, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Japanese Government, nor those of any other writer.

It is my sincere hope that the information in this article will enhance your collection, or at least, your awareness. Good luck in your coin collecting and happy hunting!

(Editor's Note: Mr. Johnson advises that the foregoing article was derived from a number of numismatic references, and especially the Japanese Numismatic Dealers Association for their publications. A special thanks he makes to his wife for her expert help in translating and providing historic background on the Japanese people).

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(Continued from Page 2)

wife, to assist him at the bourse table on the sales floor the cost is still higher. (On several ocassions it is possible that the sales from the show will not even cover his expenses).

I do know that if local coin shows are to continue attracting the well known, reputable deales from our distant cities and/or states, sponsoring clubs must face reality and recognize that eventually the dealers will reach the point when they will not find it profitable to attend the coin shows and pay the ever increasing bourse fees charged by sponsoring organizations.

An alternative would be by charging a modest admission fee to the general public attending the show. Hopefully, the results would enable the club to arrange for the best location available which will meet space requirements, thus making it advantageous to the collector, investor, the coin dealer and sponsoring organization. How do the NCNA Member Clubs react to the mentioned editorial on the subject of charging admission fees? The State organization would appreciate any views on the subject from the many clubs throughout the State.

R.E. Southworth
Life Member #47"

(Editor's Note: Right on Russell! A coin dealer is like any other business man. He must have an adequate mark-up to cover expenses and profit. If expenses increase he must charge more for the product, or, pay less for the product to maintain a proper margin. A coin show is a market place. There are a lot of persons attending who are "lookers". We suggest that they share in the cost of the operation by paying a modest attendance fee. Legitimate coin club members who support the hobby through dues paid to local clubs, would be exempt!)

We have received a very nice letter from one of NCNAs out-of-state Members--Mr. William O. Wisslead, Santa Anna, California. NCNA has about 30% of its membership living out-of-state, in case you didn't know.

(Continued on Page 15)

(Continued from Page 14)

I gather from Bill's letter that he retired from public business (or private) some time back, and since that time has worked twice as hard on behalf of numismatics. For example, he is a member of 70 different coin clubs, local, regional, and state thruout the U.S.A.! He said he joined all these clubs because he wasn't getting much mail! Bill says that he and his good wife, Elizabeth, have a great time doing good works for coin clubs and associations.

At present, Bill is assisting in the preparation of the Tenth Annual Numismatic Educational Symposium of the California State Numismatic Association. He is the Educational Officer for CSNA and Past President of CSNA. The Symposium was held in March and had many biggies in numismatics as speakers.

Bill and Elizabeth attend all the ANA Conventions. I hope I will have the opportunity to meet them this year in Houston.

Anybody who is member of 70 Numismatic organizations should be nominated for ANA's Numismatist of Year Award!

Your Editor hopes other out-of-staters will write and tell us about their activities. Thanks, Bill!

DUES, DUES, DUES

N.C.N.A.'s esteemed Treasurer, Mr. Russell Southworth has informed me that too many members have not paid their 1978 Dues. According to the By-Laws this is the last issue of the JOURNAL you will receive if you don't pay up forthwith!

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